Some THOUGHTS on the

CHARACTER

OF

Solomon's Vertuous Woman,

Preach'd in a

SERMON

AT THE

Pariſh-Church of *Croydon*,

On the occaſion of

Q. Mary's Death,

January the 6th. 169$\frac{4}{5}$.

Printed at the Requeſt of thoſe that heard it.

By JOHN EVANS M. A.

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(4), 36 ſh

To the Honourable the Lady *Conings by*, Wife of the Right Honourable *Thomas* Lord *Conings by*.

MADAM,

THis Diſcourſe, how unpoliſh'd ſoever its Dreſs is, preſumes to proſtrate it ſelf at your Ladiſhip's feet, begging your kind Acceptance and Sanctuary, upon this Recommendation, that to this Addreſs, 'twas not the vanity of gracing the Title Page by prefixing ſo great a Name to it, which moved me, but my deep Veneration of your Worth, and the Sence of my Gratitude for the more than ordinary ſhare your Honourable Family have ever vouchſafed me in their Favour.

I am conſcious, that the vaſt Diſproportion the meanneſs of this Performance carries to the tranſcendent Majeſty of its noble Theme, can no other way be ſecur'd from blame and cenſure, then under the protection of ſo great a Patroneſs: a Patroneſs, whoſe Greatneſs conſiſts not in meer Cumulation of ſwelling Titles, or glittering Outſide, but in perſonal Dignity and real Goodneſs; the Deſcription whereof ſhould I eſſay to draw, the Draught would fall ſo far below the Excellence of ſo high, ſo compleat an Original, as by the very attempt I ſhould incur the ſame Guilt, I ſtand ſelf-arraigned for, in the ſubſequent Preſumption, I mean that of ſullying the illuſtrious Characters of thoſe Divine Accompliſhments, which an Apelles's Pencil, the moſt skilful Artiſt cannot ſufficiently delineate or repreſent; and may therefore more prudently be paſſed by in ſilent Admiration and Eſteem.

Let it herein ſuffice, and that with great truth, to ſay, if a Commutation could have been accepted for this Royal Death, your Ladyſhip would with the Firſt have expreſſed your Loyal Affection in the Oblation of the Subſtitute, as evidently appears by that ample Proportion of Grief which your ſelf voluntarily bears on this mournful Occaſion. And would the World but

prove

prove ſo juſt and grateful to our common Benefactrix, as your Ladiſhip does, in writing after ſo fair a Copy; her late Majeſty's Memory on that ſtock might grow immortal, and (what is the general Ambition of Mankind) reflect as fragrant odor on the Dead, as on the Living, and thoſe that are yet unborn.

Such an excellent Perſon indeed had merited an Apotheoſis among the Ancient or Modern Romans: had ſhe died in their Communion, they would have enrolled her Name in the Regiſters of their Polytheiſm, *preſerved her Sacred Reliques for Divine Homage and Adoration: Altars had been erected and Sacrifice offer'd to Her. But that Work of Supererogation is too much, as well as bare Remembrance is too little: there is a ſafe* Medium *between theſe Extremes, and that is Thankfulneſs to God for, and Imitation of her matchleſs Piety and Vertue: This is all the Honour, and the higheſt Reſpect, either ſhe is capable of receiving, or we of paying to her Merits; which Debt is ſo religiouſly diſcharged by your Ladiſhip's ingenuous Deportment; to whoſe genuine Candor I humbly ſubmit theſe Papers, to over-look thoſe Faults, which are too palpable to bear the examination of exact, impartial Judgment. May my Lord and your Ladiſhip, after having been many years, the one an Ornament to the Church, the other an uſeful Pillar of the State, like ripe Fruit, in the Vintage of old Age, drop into* Abraham's *Boſom; and may thoſe tender Branches, which Heaven hath bleſſed you with, commence as early and grow up as perfectly in Religion, as our moſt Chriſtian Princeſs did, is the conſtant, ſincere Prayer of,*

Madam,

Your Ladiſhips moſt humble

and obedient Servant

JOHN EVANS.

PROVERBS XXXI. 31.

Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praiſe her in the gates.

THO' ſome unthinking Heads may be willingly apt, and would fain perſwade themſelves to forget that the Divine œconomy is as extenſive as the utmoſt limits of the Univerſe: and by that means are become poſſeſſed with the groundleſs prejudice and fancy, that this World is nothing elſe but a meer Lottery; as if all the affairs thereof were wholly in the diſpoſal, and waited on the uncertain contingencies of a blind Chance, or the worſe determination of a fatal Neceſſity.

Yet I am ſure there are ſuch remarkable Occurrances, as are far above the capacity of natural Cauſes to produce; which therefore plainly diſcover and point out the Al-wiſe counſel and uncontroulable proceedings of an Almighty Agent, that manages and over-rules all events. Which are ſufficient Indications of his Being, and ſuch demonſtrative Evidences, as abundantly convince and lead all conſiderate men to the knowledge of the Supreme Governour of Heaven and Earth; without whoſe immediate order, or permiſſion, even *a Sparrow can't fall to the ground.* Mat. 10. 29 And if ſo mean a part of the Creation, ſo inconſiderable an action, (which ſeems moſt fortuitous and trifling) be not below his cognizance and appointment, 'tis much more rational to ſuppoſe, that the Life of Man, and all Human Affairs, are things wherein his Providence is more eſpecially concern'd. For theſe are worthier Subjects for him to exert and imploy his Divine Powers upon, and capable of reflecting the moſt Glory on his Majeſty.

And among Human Affairs, what are ſo noble, ſo momentany, ſo deſerving his Power and Wiſdom, as thoſe of Kings and Commonwealths; upon the manegery whereof, the temporal welfare or adverſity of his People does chiefly depend?

If we then ſtudy the Divine Providence with the ſame application of mind as others do the Terreſtrial Globe, and diligently obſerve its various, tho' myſterious Diſpenſations, it will ſoon ſatisfie us in this great Truth, That *the moſt High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomſoever he will.* Which is a Prerogative, when he firſt laid the Foundation of his Government, he reſerved to himſelf: and thoſe Laws, which he has ſince given to Mankind for their inſtruction, and the meaſures of their comportment under it, ſeem no way to abridge him in the exerciſe of this Prerogative. By virtue of which, he ſtill removes Kings, and ſetteth up Kings, as he pleaſes, or as he ſees ſometimes neceſſary, for the preſervation of his Church, or for the puniſhment of either King or People. For the proof of both, your own obſervation, if you impartially recollect and reflect on thoſe notices you have repoſited in your minds, can eaſily furniſh you with ſo many inſtances, that 'tis needleſs to recount or inſiſt on particulars.

Dan. 4. 17.

I will only remind of thoſe things which have happen'd in theſe Kingdoms, and in theſe late Years. When the Spirits of theſe Nations flag'd, and our Hearts fail'd us for fear, and for looking after thoſe things which were coming on the Earth, Divine Providence was pleas'd to diſperſe that Cloud of melancholy Apprehenſions, by removing the Cauſe of it; and amidſt our Danger and Deſpondence, ſurprize us with Safety and Deliverance, by the opportune Arrival of his preſent Majeſty and late Conſort. Who out of a compaſſionate reſentment and tender regard of the juſt Intereſt of Chriſtendom, after much importunity, were prevail'd with

to

to accept the Crown of *England*; not as a Prize of Ambition or Covetouſneſs; not as a Reward of their Merits only; but as an opportunity of doing Good, of ſaving a ſinking State: that in this Sphere they might move more vigorouſly in defence of the Proteſtant Religion, and vindication of the Oppreſſed againſt the growing Greatneſs of Arbitrary Power, and the uſurpation of Popery.

The commencement of whoſe auſpicious Reign, having no other deſign to ſerve than that of our Common Good, gave ſufficient encouragement to make us flatter our ſelves with fair promiſes of many Halcyon days, and moſt flouriſhing Condition. Which began to bloom about this little World, and make all our Froſt-nipt hopes ſprout out in joy.

But alas! ſuch a Bleſſing was too great for ſo ſinful a People to expect the long enjoyment of; whoſe baſe ingratitude and continued impenitence under the influence of ſo much Favour, could not but provoke Heaven, in ſome meaſure, to ſhift the Scene, and ſpeak to us by the Meſſenger of Mortality. For it's uſual for God Almighty, by a Deprivation, to teach unthankful men the value of thoſe things which they would not learn by the enjoyment.

O Death! Thou King of Terrour, how terrible and fatal is thy ſting! how cruel and inevitable thy ſtroke! which neither Crowns nor Dominions, neither Mitres nor any Majeſty whatſoever, can eſcape, or ſecure their Owners from, for one moment. But the Rich, as well as the Poor, the greateſt Potentates, as well as the meaneſt Peaſants, muſt ſtoop to Death, and pay their Lives as Tribute to this Conquerour, who inſults over the Frailty of Human Nature. From whence we ſee, that the Life of Man is but of little value, and all his Honour but contemptible; becauſe that Worm of Corruption lies at the root of this Gourd, and defaces the grace and ſplendour of all earthly things. For no

ſooner Man draws the Breath of Life, be his Birth and Condition what it will, than he is enrolled in the Regiſter of Death; and from the Womb makes ſwift and direct advances to the Grave. So that in reference to his abode on earth, I may, with the Royal Prophet, call him *a vain Shadow*; and
Jam. 4. 14. his *life*, with St. *James*, *even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vaniſheth away.* A Life, full of the ſnares of Death; which, the more it increaſes, the more decreaſes; whilſt it flouriſhes, it grows infirm; and the farther it goes, the nearer its approaches are unto Death; from whoſe Arreſt no Claims of Honour, no Diſtinctions of Quality, no Practice of Piety and Vertue, can grant any Priviledge or Protection. For that inexorable Sergeant in the execution of his Office, obſerves no ſuch Marks of difference, as can in the leaſt ſway with him to reſpect the Perſons or Conditions of Men.

If either Majeſty, or Goodneſs, or the vigour of youthful Conſtitution, whetted by gentle Exerciſe, and the ſtrict obſervance of the Rules of Temperance and Moderation, could have ſtay'd its violent hand, we ſhould now have had no occaſion given us to condole the Funeral Obſequies and Mournful Solemnity of the Beſt of Women, and of Queens: which bids adieu to all preſent entertainments of Joy and Pleaſure, and clothes the Nation with Sables and Blacks of Sadneſs; which hangs our Walls, not only with Mourning, but deep Sighs and Groans; and fills theſe three Kingdoms with melting Eyes, and ſighing Accents, for our irrepairable loſs.

But oh! what Floods of Tears, what Tyde of Ejulations, can ſwell ſo high as to bear a proportion equal to the Merits of ſo great, ſo good a Perſonage? *Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praiſe her in the gates.*

In

In this Chapter the Wiſe man,(upon whoſe vaſt knowledge and experienc'd judgment we may ſafely depend for the beſt determination of the Caſe) after he had enquir'd, *who could find a vertuous Woman*, and ſubjoyn'd the reaſon of his enquiry, *becauſe her price is far above Rubies*; gives us a plain, but an exact deſcription of ſuch an excellent Perſon, as a Rule and Standard, whereby ſhe might be the more eaſily diſcover'd and prov'd. He tells us, ſhe is accompliſh'd with all the Perfections, both Human and Divine, Natural and Acquir'd, that her Sex can be capable of. She is tender and loyal to her Husband; indefatigably diligent and induſtrious in Buſineſs; prudent and diſcreet in the government of her Family; charitable to the Poor, bountifully diſpenſing of her ſtore, to ſupply the indigencies of all wanting People; affable and courteous to every Perſon; pious and devout towards God; in each of theſe reſpects, and in every inſtance of a vertuous Woman, acquitting her ſelf with popular applauſe, and the higheſt commendation.

In the cloſe of this Diſcourſe, I doubt not, but you will all unanimouſly agree with me, in anſwering *Solomon*'s queſtion in the affirmative, That we of this Nation had once found, but, alas! are now depriv'd of ſuch a vertuous Lady, in the Perſon of our moſt gracious Queen; as will evidently appear, when we have tried her Character by theſe Marks. In treating of which, I ſhall, with all humble deference and veneration that is due to a Soveraign Power, endeavour to repreſent to your view ſome of her extraordinary Vertues and Perfections.

Here I ſhall not entertain you, and my ſelf, with a Panegyrick on the lively Features, the beautiful Symmetry or well-proportion'd Parts of her Royal Perſon; tho' that ſhould not be paſſed by without a particular admiration of it; which grac'd the Engliſh Throne, and adorn'd her Majeſtick Preſence with ſo lovely a meen, as could not but charm

charm the Eyes of all Spectators. Since Mortality, with grief I ſpeak it, I ſay, ſince unhappy Mortality has drawn a dark Veil over theſe Reliques, I ſhall only recommend to your pious imitation thoſe incomparable, immortal Beauties, and Ennoblements of her Mind, the Ornaments of a meek
1 Pet. 3. 4. and quiet Spirit, which is in the ſight of God *of great price.*

Neiter ſhall I preſume to trace, or attend this ſingular Lady through every Scene and Condition of her Life, as a ſingle Perſon, or married Woman, as Princeſs of *Orange*, or Queen of *England*; that were a Task enough for a more learned Pen near her Majeſty to perform. Tho' in all theſe Conditions, it may be truly ſaid, She always manag'd herſelf with that honourable Reputation and wiſe Conduct, that ſhe appear'd to have all the Vertue and Goodneſs, but none indeed, I think none, of the Vanities and Imperfections of her Sex.

In diſcourſing therefore of her noble Character, I ſhall a little invert the order which the Wiſe man has here obſerv'd, and digeſt my Matter into this Method. I ſhall conſider,

1. *Firſt*, Her Piety, with ſome uſeful Reflections upon it.
2. *Secondly*, Her admirable Condeſcention.
3. *Thirdly*, Her extraordinary Charity.

Theſe I take to be the chief Characteriſticks of a Vertuous Woman.

I ſhall alſo in the laſt place, juſt mention ſome of her other Vertues, and then apply the whole to our preſent purpoſe.

1. *Firſt*, I begin with her Piety; becauſe this is the neceſſary Foundation of all the other Vertues and Graces of a vertuous Woman; and on that ſcore, has the precedence in the nature and order of things. For Piety in the moſt comprehenſive notion of the word, containing all the Dimenſions and

and Boundaries of the Divine Scheme, is that pregnant Principle which works the Mind into an univerſal regard of all God's commands; and, like the animal ſpirit, diffuſes it ſelf thro' the whole Man, producing acts ſuitable to it ſelf, and in no way repugnant to thoſe commands. Therefore, as the natural motions of a Man are the immediate effects of the animal Spirit, ſo all his good, moral Actions, proceed from this Fountain of Piety, and are the proper Emanations of this vital Principle.

But without this internal ſenſe of Religion, all our religious Performances can be eſteemed no better than meer Form and Pageantry, the Profeſſion of Hypocrites.

Now this genuine ſenſation of true Piety was admirable in her Majeſty, and above the flights of Rhetorick, which diſcover'd it ſelf thro' the whole courſe and method of her Life; and that chiefly diſtinguiſhed, and rais'd her above the rank and condition of ordinary Mortals.

Some indeed are blown up to the high Pinacle of Honour, by the auſpicious Gale of Fortune, and owe their height more to the benevolence of others, than to any merit of their own. But then all their towring Height and glittering Shew, without true, ſolid Goodneſs to give it life, is but a golden, ſenſleſs Effigies, or an airy Meteor, which only dazles the eyes in its tranſit, and then vaniſhes into its firſt Matter.

Whereas Piety is a ſubſtantial Good, which intrinſick worth doth infinitely excell all the goods and pomp of Greatneſs. The one is Human, Earthly, and Temporal; the other Divine, Heavenly, and of Eternal Duration; this raiſes a Perſon to an higher ſtep of Advancement then Secular Greatneſs can poſſibly arrive unto. For Religion, being truly Divine, both in its original, and in its end, as it came down from Heaven, ſo tends thither again, and thither it exalts its Votaries. In order whereunto it ſpiritualizes Humanity,

manity, and never leaves off refining it from its Terrene Imperfections, till it be in ſome meaſure aſſimulated, and united to the Divine Nature, till our Minds are transform'd into the very Image of the Deity, and in the Apoſtle's phraſe, *Chriſt is formed in us.*

Gal. 4. 19.

By this time, and not before, it is that we have ſomething of true value, and ſolid Greatneſs in us. For God Almighty being the Fountain and the Meaſure of all Perfections, the nearer any Perſon approaches him, by the practice of Sanctity and Goodneſs, (the only way and means to become like God) the worthier, and the more to be valued he is; and the more hereby he participates of God's Nature, by ſo much the more excellent and honourable he muſt needs be; and conſequently the greater praiſe and eſteem ſhould attend him, in reſpect of that Divine reſemblance he bears.

If ſo, how admirably good, and great, and honorary will this moſt Religious Princeſs appear, if we meaſure her Character by that Rule, and from thence make an eſtimate of her Worth? in whom the Divine Idea did ſo eminently manifeſt it ſelf, in all the Inſtances of holy Living, that her whole Life was a Pattern not unworthy of our imitation.

As Piety, in its limited ſence, ſignifies Devotion; how conſtant, how regular, and how ſeraphick was ſhe in this? like pious *Anna, ſerving God night and day in the Temple*; ſo ſtrictly obſerving the ſtated times of Publick Prayers, that neither the neceſſary refreſhments of Nature, nor all the hurry and ſucceſſion of State-affairs, which perpetually crouded in for her adjuſtment and diſpatch, could ſcarce ever extort from her any intermiſſion of them. From hence we may with good reaſon conclude, That our Lord's direction for praying, in our retirements *to the Father, who ſeeth in ſecret*, could be no leſs practis'd in her private Devotion.

Luk. 2. 37.

Matt. 6. 6.

At the Celebration of every part of Divine Worſhip, how fixt

fixt and intent her mind? how fervent and enflam'd her Affections, which were ſo warm and devotional, as could not but enkindle the cold indifference of all wandring adjacent Minds? How conſtant and uniform was her whole Practice in the ſeveral Duties of the Chriſtian Inſtitution? and that without the leaſt tincture of vanity or oſtentation.

And all theſe pious Performances were the reſult, not of conſtraint, like that of a melancholy Recluſe, but of free and generous Reſolution, of an unaffected, well grounded Zeal; ſo neither were they cloiſter'd or confin'd within the narrow limits of her Cloſet, but moſtly acted on the Stage of the World; and by a general, and no leſs true report, *proclaim'd on the Houſe-top*; the ſound whereof has long ſince pierced thro', and ecchoed in every corner of the Land, even *from Dan to Beerſheba*. Whereby this ſhining Model of Chriſtian Vertues muſt needs prove the moſt perſwaſive Oratory, the moſt effectual means to recommend to, and engage all her Subjects in the Practice of Religion. For Example is of much more force and efficacy than Precept, or the beſt Diſcourſes: It hath a ſecret power and influence upon thoſe whom we govern or converſe with, to mould and form them into the ſame manners and diſpoſition. And by conſequence, nothing in the World can contribute ſo much to promote the Honour of God, and the Propagation of the Goſpel, as the Exemplary Lives of thoſe who make profeſſion of it. Hence it is we are enjoyn'd to *let our light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee our good works*, and be induc'd thereby *to glorifie our heavenly Father*. Matt. 5.16.

For this great End, her Majeſty was one of the fitteſt, beſt accompliſh'd Inſtruments that ever weilded the Engliſh Sceptre. To attempt the Reformation of our Manners, and eſtabliſh Holineſs and Vertue in the Hearts and Lives of theſe Kingdoms, ſuitable to the Principles of our Reform'd Religion; and to carry on ſo great a work with ſucceſs, none was

ſo proper, ſo well qualified in every reſpect. To which end, among other qualifications, theſe three are eſſentially neceſſary.

1. 1. Good Example.
2. 2. Authority.
3. 3. Zeal.

1. 1. The firſt Requiſite is good Example. Whoever goes about to reform others, muſt firſt ſee and take care that his own Life be free from thoſe Faults which he would amend in them. For if his Life be tainted with the ſame Errors, or ſhew that he has no ſerious regard to Religion, for what reaſon ſhould other men think that he is in earneſt? or if he be, they, who attend more to what a man doth, than what he ſaith, will be apt to make no other conſtruction of his Arguments, be they never ſo preſſing, but this, That they are only the empty flouriſhes of a well-worded Eloquence or the effects of the Man's natural Paſſion.

But for that Objection here was no room; the moſt inveterate Adverſaries could never yet charge this Royal Reformatrix with any of thoſe Vices which ſhe has been labouring to rectifie in the Nation: nay, they could not but be ſatisfied in the ſincerity of her good Intention, when they ſaw her Life to be nothing elſe but the Tranſcript of our Saviour's Doctrine: this prevented their prejudice, this ſtopp'd *the mouths of Gainſayers*. Hence it plainly appears, that no Impediment in her Practice could obſtruct the accompliſhing of this intended Reformation. Had we corrected and fram'd our Lives by hers, we might have been the moſt religious and happieſt People in the World, that ever liv'd ſince the planting of the Goſpel in this Iſland, which has not theſe many hundred years (if ever) ſeen ſuch a bright Example of Piety and Goodneſs ſitting upon the Throne. Which put Religion into the poſſibility of attracting others, when they perceiv'd

perceiv'd it ſo illuſtriouſly viſible in ſuch a Noble Perſon; whoſe Example had the higheſt Authority and Majeſty on its ſide. That's another qualification neceſſary to render any Example more prevalent.

2. To reform Mankind, or to produce any remarkable change in their Manners, the utmoſt endeavours of private Men, nay the moſt vigorous attempts of ſubordinate Officers, are too weak and ineffective; their Actions being as inconſiderable, as their Perſons are regardleſs, can have no power on their Superiours, it being againſt the grain and the eſtabliſh'd courſe of Nature, whereby the higher Bodies are ſuppos'd to influence thoſe below; the inferiour Orbs are whirl'd round by the motion of the *Primum mobile*, and not *vice verſâ*, there is no re-action in this caſe.

And therefore all Attempts and Endeavours for Reformation are but like beating the Air, vain and fruitleſs, ſo long as wickedneſs reigns in High places, is countenanced by the Pattern of the Higher Powers: as it was ſome years ſince; when Idolatry was bearing down before it all bounds of true Piety and Vertue, and ready to eſtabliſh its Empire by a Statute-Law; for the accompliſhing which, there was nothing wanting but the Concurrence and Votes of the two honourable Houſes at *Weſtminſter*.

But that Point being now weather'd and paſt, Religion has once again lifted up its Head above the Waters. And Piety, that rare, but neceſſary qualification of Princes, being return'd to Court, has, from thence, lookt down Vice with a Majeſtick Countenance; and by the advantage of the Supreme Authority on its ſide, was (and I hope ſtill is) in a very fair way of recovering its priſtin Reputation and Eſteem, together with its former Ground. For when Religion comes commiſſion'd and arm'd with the mighty Power of the Prince's Example, who is ſo diſloyal, or ſtrong enough to reſiſt its force? When nothing is herein impos'd

on every Subject, but what is frankly perform'd by the Magiſtrate himſelf; what ſhould hinder but that Vertue muſt become faſhionable, and that natural Ambition which moſt Men have of being in the faſhion, and like their Governours, make them Religious too?

'Tis a general Obſervation that Wealth and Honour have theſe two advantageous Appendages, as they render any Perſon more conſiderable, and his actions no leſs noted; ſo they create in others an honeſt Emulation, an aptneſs to embrace his Dictates, and tranſcribe his Copies. If thoſe therefore, whoſe Superiority above others, have vaſt Authority over them, whoſe Sphere is large, and Influence great, who have many Dependents or Subjects who court their Favour, and whoſe intereſt it is to obſerve and pleaſe them; if thoſe, I ſay, would faithfully diſcharge that great Obligation which lies upon them, of giving good Example, what plentiful Harveſt of Souls might Heaven reap by them? For the Multitude, like the leſſer Lines in the Circle, generally tend to the ſame Center, either of Vertue or Vice, by a kind of a natural Inſtinct act, more upon the Principle of Imitation, than upon thoſe of Reaſon and Religion. Upon this it was that *Iſocrates* grounds his Advice to *Nicocles*; the Advice indeed was worthy of ſo great an Orator to give, and not below the Dignity of the Magiſtrate to obſerve in the Adminiſtration of the Government,

Iſocratis Oratio ad Nicocl.

Ἀλλὰ τῷ σαυτῷ σωφροσυνὴν παράδειγμα, τοῖς ἄλλοις, καθίςη, γινώσκων ὅτι τὸ τὴς πόλεως ὅλης Ἔθος ὁμοιοῦται τοῖς ἄρχουσι; *i. e. But ſet your ſelf a Pattern of Temperance and Moderation, or Religion and Vertue to others, as knowing that's the uſual Mode of the People to conform to, and write after the Copy ſet them by their Magiſtrates.*

3. Another Requiſite in a Perſon that would Reform others, is Zeal. Zeal is the very Soul and Life of Chriſtianity; an Affection, of all others, the moſt active and vigilant,

lant, and which is wont to inſpire Men with the moſt paſſionate care and concernment for Religion, without which all our pretences to it are but formal and ſuperficial.

And this Zeal ſeems to have had a deep Foundation in the Natural Forwardneſs of their Majeſties Tempers; which, as we have ſufficiently experienc'd, put them upon the moſt dangerous Undertakings, for the Reſcue and neceſſary Defence of the beſt Religion and Conſtitution in the World.

When an over-ſpreading Degeneracy had ſeized the Vitals of this Nation; when the whole Body was well nigh ſick, and over-run by ſtrange Looſneſs of Manners, and Profaneneſs of Spirit, and had, for many years, labour'd and groan'd under the inevitable preſſures of theſe Epidemical Diſtempers; to undertake the difficult Cure thereof, no competent Phyſician was to be found, no, not in our *Iſrael*; till Divine Providence, in compaſſionate regard of our languiſhing Condition, was pleas'd to enflame and ſtir up the Zeal of their Majeſties to ſtep in to our Help and Aſſiſtance. Since their Arrival, and being happily ſet over us, towards the purging and removing away theſe Maladies, how diligent, how active, and how zealous have they been, not only by their own excellent Examples, but alſo by injoyning all their ſubordinate Magiſtrates to put the Laws in execution againſt the Contagious Evils of the Age; and ſo with all their might, and by all prudent ways and means, endeavouring to recover Men out of the *Snares of the Devil*, whereby too many were taken captive; and to vindicate and ſecure the Honour and the Worſhip of the moſt High God, againſt the daring Inſolence of bold Impiety and Atheiſm? How dutifully ſome of the Magiſtracy obey'd their Injunction, or how far this Reformation has been advanced, is a Reflection beſide my preſent Intention.

How-

However, had the Queen liv'd to give the finiſhing ſtroke to her pious Deſign and Reſolution, in joynt Concurrence with our gracious King, (on whom alone, next under Heaven, our Hope is now devolved and united, for the vigorous Proſecution of ſo glorious a Cauſe) we might have ſeen the perſecuted Woman in the *Apolypſe*, victoriouſly *triumphing over the old Dragon.* But that Victory is yet incompleated, although this Royal Conquereſs has already *fought her good Fight, kept the Faith, and obtain'd the Crown of Righteouſneſs.* I proceed,

2. *Secondly*, To conſider her wonderful Condeſcention and moſt obliging Carriage. What we call Humility in others, may be (I think) not improperly ſtyled Condeſcention in Princes: which is another Mark of a vertuous Woman, and of a good Chriſtian, and it was a ſpecial Ingredient of her Maſteſty's Character.

However to vulgar and carnal Eyes this may appear but abject, mean, and a deſpicable quality, yet really the Soul of Man is not capable of an higher and more noble Endowment. It is ſilly ignorance of one's own Imperfections, and foreign Dependance, I mean upon God, begets Pride, that deſtructive Elevation of Mind, which transforms the Saint into a Fiend, and which hurl'd down the prime Angels from the Throne of Glory to the Abyſs of infernal Miſery. For God hath ever *reſiſted the proud.* But Humility reſults from a better Judgment, and more intimate Acquaintance with excellent things, which keeps Men from doting on Trifles, or admiring themſelves upon ſome petty Attainments. Beſides, this abaſing Temper imports a peculiar Eminence, beyond all natural and moral Perfections, as being the peculiar Grace of the Goſpel; and alſo the Root and Preſerver of all other Graces and Vertues.

Humility

Humility is the peculiar Grace of the Goſpel. Before the Chriſtian Inſtitution, the World were much ſtrangers to it. Among the ancient Heathens, their Maſters of Morality, in their Philoſophical Diſcourſes of Fortitude, Temperance, Wiſdom, Juſtice, and other Vertues, take no notice of that of Humility. And they were ſo far from practiſing it themſelves, that we find as deep ſilence in their Lives as in their Inſtitutions; nay in their Works they affected Popular Eſteem, and the Eternizing of their Names. And tho' ſome of the moſt rigid Sects of them, pretended by an auſtere Courſe of Life, to contemn the World, and mortifie their Paſſion; yet even in this they were extremely proud; whilſt other Men were deſpis'd by them, themſelves deſired to be obſerv'd and eſteem'd.

So that *Lowlineſs of Mind* is the appropriate Law of our Bleſſed Saviour, from whoſe Life and Doctrine we learn it. 'Twas with this he began his Divine Sermon on the Mount, ſaying, *Bleſſed are the poor in ſpirit*, i. e. the humble. And he continues and ends it with this. Whereby we may underſtand, both the great excellence of this Vertue, and the great need we have of it; ſince the Son of God came down from Heaven to teach us the practice of, and make himſelf our Pattern therein.

As this was the firſt Corner-ſtone in the Foundation of our Lord's Building, ſo 'tis ſtill the Foundation and Preſerver of all Chriſtian Superſtructures. As the Flower imbibes its nutriment, and receives its ſupport from the Root, which being eradicated, the Flower inſtantly fades and withers; ſo every Vertue whatſoever, if it do not grow and continue in this Root or Ground of Humility, degenerates into its contrary. All vertuous Actions therefore muſt be commenced, accompanied, and conſummated by Humility. If vain Complacence and Self-pleaſing thruſt in, that mars and ſpoils the grace and beauty of the beſt Performances. So neceſſary

neceſſary then is this humbleneſs of Spirit for the acquiring and conſerving all other Vertues, that even Faith, that firſt Principle of Chriſtianity, ſuppoſeth a ſubmiſs and humble Underſtanding, a Diſpoſition requiſite for its Reception and final Improvement.

Whereas Pride is a dangerous Rock, upon which the Faith of many has been ſplit; who have afterwards grown ſo ſtiff and tenacious of their Errors, that even Miracles were not demonſtration ſufficient to reſtore or convince them.

But this Wind, this Vanity which puffeth up, was ſo far from taking root, or finding any entertainment in her Highneſs's Breaſt, that notwithſtanding all the Temptations which ſurrounded her Royal Perſon, and might have carried up her Mind to the higheſt Pyramid of Pride, (had not her Temper been very correct and ſtay'd) ſhe was humble, in a manner, to the loweſt ſtep of Abaſure; and yet without any debaſement of Majeſty, or making her ſelf cheap.

There are two things apt to ſwell Men's minds, and tempt them to form a fond Opinion of their own Worth, (which oft creates an unjuſt Contempt of others) namely ſome internal Endowments, or ſome external Poſſeſſions.

As to the firſt, Nature, Birth, and Education conſpired to greaten this Noble Soul with the moſt exquiſite Ornaments of an accompliſh'd Lady. From hence ſhe derived a quick and piercing Apprehenſion, prompt and retentive Memory, ſprightly and active Fancy, clear and ſolid Judgment over-ruling them all. Theſe being all ſo much improv'd by frequent Meditation and Experience, that no ſtation inferiour to that wherein ſhe was plac'd, no dignity ſubordinate to what ſhe ſuſtain'd, were worthy enough of ſo much intellectual Nobility and Goodneſs; which in very few years are grown ripe for a Crown of immarceſſible Glory.

As

As for External Advantages or Poſſeſſions, Fortune, or rather Providence could not, on this ſide Heaven, have ſet her upon an higher Pinacle of Honour and Greatneſs: For Princes are in Scripture ſtyled *Gods*. They are the Almighty's Vicegerents on Earth. Pſal. 81 6.

Now amidſt all theſe high Accompliſhments and Altitudes of Honour, ſhe ſtill kept her ſelf within the Region of Humility, like the Sun in this lower Firmament, emitting her benign Influences on all her People, and treating them with all expreſſions of Humanity and Condeſcention: which were no ordinary Vertue, no ordinary degree of Abaſement: For, tho' Men, who are endow'd with Parts and Excellencies above others, ſhould, not unlike the full Ears of Corn, bend the lower; and thoſe, whom God has rais'd in Fortune, paramount as Stars, ſhould, in ſome ſence, ſeem the leſſer for their Height. But that looks like Paradox to the greateſt part of Mankind. Human Nature being ſo prone to ſwell upon a conceit of its own Perfections, that few Heads are ſtrong enough to endure Heights, and walk upon Spires and Pinacles, without growing vertiginous; ſo indeed Wealth and Honour may be, not unjuſtly, termed; which, like the loftieſt Piles, are always aſſaulted by the higheſt winds. And the ſublimer any Perſon is advanc'd in Honour and Greatneſs, the more temptations and hazards attend him, and by ſo much ſharper will be the Combat of Vanity and Self-eſteem. But then the greater the difficulty and danger are, the more honourable the Victory wherever it is atchiev'd. According to which Rule, how ineffably excellent was the condeſcending Vertue of our Great Deceaſed? which exerted it ſelf to all Men's admiration, in her moſt obliging Carriage and indefatigable Diligence.

1. *First*, In the Obligingneſs and Affability of her Carriage, expreſſed to all Mankind. Who, upon any Emergency, was ever debar'd the favour of her Preſence, or denied acceſs to her ſacred Perſon; or ſent away without a ſmooth, eaſie, and ſatisfactory Anſwer to his Requeſt? Her Majeſty did not diſdain to vouchſafe a candid Audience to the humble Petitions of all Addreſſers, and to the utmoſt of her power, a ready Redreſs to thoſe aggrieved; contrary to the humour of thoſe days, when the Higher Power were to be, not petitioned, but obeyed without reſerve; when nothing, but fulſom Compliments were received, without a Frown.

But the Temper of this gracious Soul was more ſerene and free from ſullen State and Imperiouſneſs, the ordinary Infirmity of Princes. Her whole Deportment was ſo eaſie and pleaſing, that it gave a lovely Pattern of chearful Air, admirable Sweetneſs and Familiarity, which at once gained Affections and preſerved Reſpect in all about her. Thus Humility and Greatneſs were ſafe in its own worth; not maintaining it ſelf by a moroſe diſtance, but comporting with the moſt condeſcending Majeſty.

Some Men's Veins ſwell with their Fortune; and their Pulſe keeping time with that, beat ſo high and quick, as if they fancied Greatneſs conſiſted in looking ſtern and big, or that ſupercilious Gravity and diſdainful Look, could extort a Reverence from all Mankind. Which is ſo far from being a Mark of true Nobility, that, if I be not miſtaken, it is no more than meer Pageantry and Vapour. And alſo, in its Aims and Hopes, it generally meets with diſappointment. For Pride defeateth its own deſign, and deprives a Man of that Honour it makes him pretend to, whilſt true, genuine Humility begets both a Veneration and Love amongſt all wiſe and diſcerning people. 'Twas this, in particular, that render'd her Majeſty ſo amiable, and ſuch a mighty Soveraign, in the hearts and affections of all men,

as

as far as known. If any thought otherwiſe of her, 'twas their ignorance of her Worth, or bigotted Prejudice, that blinded their Reaſon, and biaſs'd their Judgment, and made them think ſo.

Another Inſtance of her extraordinary Condeſcention was her indefatigable diligence and induſtrioufneſs, beyond the Cuſtom of any of her quality, and the Example of former Ages.

Tho' Nature and Religion have provided and carve'd out for every Perſon his proper Calling, wherein he may exerciſe himſelf, and imploy his Talents, that his time may not lye upon his hands, nor his other Appendages prove Snares unto him. Yet thoſe, whom Providence has prefer'd to a condition of moſt eaſe and vacancy, are ſtrongly tempted to pervert that condition into a Life of Senſuality and Idleneſs. Hence it was, that our Prince's Court, and many of the Nobility counted themſelves, manumitted from buſineſs and induſtry, as things beneath the Dignity of their Stations, ſo that working was out of faſhion, that Vertue had almoſt taken its final leave of them, till it was introduced and encouraged by our Queen; whoſe noble Pattern, as well as Preſcription had now, not only created an Imitation in moſt, but made the Apoſtle's Canon, in a manner, the ſtanding Law of her Court, *That if any would not work, neither ſhould he eat.* This diſciplined the Court it ſelf into a Royal Factory; from which, if any could claim exemption, ſurely they, that ſit at the Helm might; who, humanly ſpeaking, might be ſuppoſed to be ſent into the World, as the *Leviathan* into the Deep, to take their Paſtime therein. And conſequently to preſcribe Princes and Perſons of Quality any Manual Tasks, might well be deem'd, not only abſurd, and adjudged ridiculous, but malicious, a levelling Project of robbing them of their Birth-right, of degrading them from thoſe Priviledges

2 Coloſs. 3 10.

which belongs to their States and Conditions, and of molding them again into that Vulgar Maſs, from which Divine Providence, and Human Laws, have diſtinguiſh'd them.

But this Diſtinction, and this Conſideration were ſuperſeded by a Diviner Principle in this excellent Chriſtian, who thought Working no indecent Vertue in the higheſt Potentate, but a Duty indiſcriminately entail'd upon every Perſon; By the Obligation whereof, there being none priviledged with immunity from improving, in induſtrious negotiation, thoſe Talents, of which God has made them, not Proprietors, but Stewards. How officiouſly therefore did this mighty Princeſs condeſcend to ſet her own Hands to work, as well as thoſe of her whole Court: not unlike the Heavenly Courtiers, among whom there is not one Preſident of Pride and Sloathfulneſs, but all inceſſantly buſie themſelves, not only in ſinging Praiſes to their Lord, but in the more ſervile and laborious Offices of being Miniſtring Spirits to Men, to whom, in reſpect of Nature and Innocence, they are infinitely ſuperiour; and this they do with perfect alacrity and complacence, thinking it their greateſt Honour and Dignity to be thus imploy'd. In imitation of which Angelick Pattern, how conſtantly and indefatigably buſied were our Feminine Court, not only in the great Concern of the Sanctuary, but alſo in Affairs (as one might think) inferiour to the Greatneſs of their Quality; and that not for any Secular Profit and Advantage accruing to themſelves, but hereby to cut off and obviate all opportunity and incitement to Vice and Folly, of which Eaſe and Idleneſs are the greateſt Incendiaries; and alſo by their Example to excite the Nation to the like Vertue of Induſtry.

Here we muſt obſerve, That their Imployments were not vicious or impertinent, but always worthy, uſeful, and ingenuous. Now was not all this, like the Angels, to do

do good, purely for the good and benefit of others; others, who were far ſubordinate in Rank and Circumſtance?

In this particular, how agreeable is the Character of *Solomon*'s Woman to my preſent Theme? How did her Practice ſuit to that? *She ſeeketh wooll and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She riſeth alſo while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her houſhold, and a portion to her maidens. She girdeth her loins with ſtrength, and ſtrengthenetb her arms. She layeth her hands to the ſpindle, and her hands hold the diſtaff. She is not afraid of the ſnow for her houſhold, for all her houſhold are cloathed with double garments. She maketh herſelf tapeſtry, her cloathing is ſilk and purple.* Theſe are the Acts of the Vertuous Woman in my Text; and alſo of our deceaſed Queen. How exactly do they agree? how well do they hang together? only the latter has out-done the former in her Religious Care and Zeal for the Houſe of God, which ſhe has adorn'd with goodly Gifts and rich Ornaments of her own Manufacture. Verſ. 13. 15. 17. 19. 21. 22.

Thus her Majeſty was pleas'd to ſtoop to ſome of the meaneſt Offices of Life. To whom nothing could be more odious, than to ſee hands folded up in the boſom of Sloth and Emptineſs. Hence it was that ſhe would admit no Perſon to be idle or unimploy'd in her Royal Preſence. Nothing is ſo irkſome, ſo tedious to a diligent and induſtrious Soul, than vacation from Buſineſs; and nothing more deſirable, and more grateful to its Temper, than innocent Exerciſe and Imployment.

Thirdly, Another Mark of a Vertuous Woman is Charity. Charity, in its largeſt acceptation, comprizes the Whole of Religion. 'Tis the Sum and Abridgment of our Saviour's Doctrine, and the Whole Duty of Man written in a ſmaller Character. For all that ever God requires of 3.

us, amounts to no more but this, That we heartily and effectually Love him, and one another. Therefore *Love*, says the Apostle, *is the fulfilling of the Law.* And I may add, 'Tis the Soul of the Universe, and that which brought down God (who is Love) to Man, as well as that by which Man must ascend to God again.

Rom. 13. 10.

But in that extent Charity is forreign, and beyond the limits of our present purpose. Only that Branch of it, which we call Mercy and Compassion, falls under our consideration. In this sense the Wise man reckons it among the Properties of his Vertuous Woman. After he had described her Industry and Diligence for acquiring of Wealth, he sets this Vertue in the front of her Disbursement, (as the principal use she makes of her Acquest) *She stretcheth forth her hand to the poor, and reacheth her hands to the needy.*

Vers. 20.

So essentially necessary indeed is this Vertue to any Person's being truly Vertuous and Religious, that I need not cast about for Arguments to prove it, or to urge the Practice of it. For Kindness and Compassion is one of the prime and essential Inclinations of Mankind. By the impulse of Natural Instinct we are prompted to it. And to put off the Bowels of Mercy, what is it, but in effect to be devested of Humanity, to un-man and brutalize one's self? Be sure we do hereby disrobe our selves of Christianity, whereof doing good, and Acts of Mercy are the main and most substantial Part; the most acceptable Sacrifice we can offer, the most pleasing I had almost said meritorious Service we can perform to Almighty God: For 'tis that which derives to us all the Divine Gifts we are capable of receiving.

Now this Charity consists in giving, and in forgiving. For both which our gracious Sovereign of blessed Memory, was highly Eminent and Exemplary.

First,

First, In Giving. You have already heard what extraordinary meaſure of Piety ſhe was endued with, to which her Charity muſt needs bare an equal proportion. For in whoſe heart ſoever that Principle is permitted to make a deep impreſſion, as Heat in the Centre, it never fails to diffuſe it ſelf into the Circumference; ſo infallibly will this Divine Spark extend and manifeſt it ſelf in the more viſible effects. All the products and emanations of that Soul, which is thus inſpired and enflamed, will reſemble their Parent. An inſtance of this we have in this pious Princeſs, who, as ſhe neglected no Duty of Piety towards God, ſo likewiſe made her Love to Him ſhine forth moſt reſplendently in Offices of Kindneſs and Beneficence to his Creatures. She had it not to learn, That ſhe could not pleaſe, or glorifie her Heavenly Father better, than by bearing much Fruit, or which is all one, doing much Good in the World. 1.

This was the only Motive which, in that Critical Juncture, ſway'd her, to the acceptance of the Engliſh Crown. And whilſt ſhe wore it, ſhe had no other Affection to gratifie, no Intereſt to ſerve by it, but the Good of this Church and State, and her own moſt vehement Zeal for the doing of it.

For my part, I know no Inſtance of Charity comparable to that of reſcuing whole Nations from the Snare laid for them, from the brink of Deſpair and Ruin; and to ſuccour thoſe who are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake. Herein, who hath ever expreſſed greater Readineſs, Warmth, and Activity, than King *William* and Queen *Mary*.

To hazard one's Life to preſerve another Man's is no common Act of Charity. But for Princes to venture their Lives for the good of any People, is yet a greater matter: this

this renders the Kindneſs more precious and valuable, according to the Worth and Dignity of the Undertakers. For ſuch to expoſe themſelves, and all that is dear to them in this World, to ſave Kingdoms, is to imitate the unparallel Love of our Bleſſed Saviour, who ſpent a whole Life of Three and thirty years, in doing good to all the Kingdoms and Nations of the Earth, and to every Member thereof; and then to conſummate their Happineſs, laid down that Life, and ſpilt his Divine Soul, for the purchaſe of it. Tho' All that be ſuch a myſterious Inſtance of Divine Love, as no expreſſion of Human Affection can poſſibly, by many degrees, come up near to: yet how like to that, tho' it falls infinitely ſhort of it, is this, when Perſons of the higheſt State, (who being ſeated on ſuch a Rock, as the waves of Fortune could not probably ſhake) reach down their helping hands to relieve a People toſt in a tempeſtuous Sea of Dangers; when they, who might have ſet in a Calm, ſquandring their time in eaſe and luxury, free from corroding Cares, aſſume the Rolling of the reſtleſs Stone of State-Imployment, and toil at it with ſingular Addreſs and Integrity; and undergo the tedious Fatigues of Camps, the thouſand hazards and difficulties of Battels, beſides the dangerous paſſings of a boyſterous Sea, and the dangers of ſecret Conſpiracies; and all with undaunted Courage and unwearied Patience, for the Defence of Religion, and the Liberty of Chriſtendom, even while Death every moment ſtares them in the face; herein, I ſay, they bear the neareſt reſemblance that can be to our Great Redeemer.

This alone (if there were no other Inſtances of Charity) might ſufficiently ſerve to compenſate the omiſſion of all other. But in them, this generous Princeſs, was not wanting neither. The natural greatneſs and Generoſity of her Mind, being much enlarged by the additional Improvement

ment of a pious Inſtitution, were every whit equal, I ſhould have ſaid ſuperiour, to the Eminence and Plenty of that Condition wherein Providence had placed her. And conſequently, as her extraordinary Ability, the eaſie acceſs to her Perſon, and the wonderful Affability of her Temper, were no little Motives and Encouragements to all ſorts of Perſons to repair to her Majeſty for favour and relief, (that ſhe could never be to ſeek Objects and preſſing Occaſions to dilate her bountiful Heart, and diſperſe her benign Influences) ſo ſhe would, not only courteouſly entertain, but, to the utmoſt ſtretch of her Capacity, grant them what they had requeſted; and that, in ſuch a manner, as mightily enhanc'd the value of every Kindneſs ſhe beſtow'd, the Frankneſs of her doing it doubled the benefit and obligation. Men ſpoil a good Turn, when it is extorted from them. It loſeth its Grace and Acceptableneſs, when it is done grudgingly, and as of neceſſity.

But ſo full of Goodneſs was this Royal Heart, that like the extended full Breaſts of a nurſing Mother, it could not be at eaſe without continual venting it ſelf, till it ſometimes caus'd in her one of the deepeſt Reſentments, to find her Treaſury exhauſted, before the ſtreams of her Bounty had filled every Chanel, ſatisfied every Supplicant.

That ſhe has not left as fair and laſting Monuments of her Charity, as any of her Royal Predeceſſors, muſt be imputed to the brevity of her Life, and the expenſive circumſtances of our preſent Affairs. For doubtleſs ſuch a generous Soul could not want for mighty Projects of erecting them, and of doing much more good.

Secondly, As to the other Office of Charity, which conſiſts in Forgiving, and is peculiarly ſtyled Clemency, her native Tenderneſs pre-diſpos'd her Temper to that; ſo that had ſhe only ſwum with the ſtream of Natural Affections, 2.

her Compaſſion had been worthy enough of our Remark and Admiration. For the Nature of that Sex, conſiſting of ſofter Mold, is generally more pliant and yielding to the impreſſion of Pity; and by the ſtrength of Imagination redoubles the horrour of any ſad Object. But as Grace outgoes Nature, ſo her compaſſionate Temper, and Readineſs to Forgive, was heightned to a pitch more than ordinarily remarkable; which often tranſported her to ſuch Acts of Mercy and Oblivion, as made ſome apt to tax the preſent Eſtabliſhment with exceſs therein; there being not any thing more to be fear'd in it, than its too much Mildneſs and Clemency. But thereby ſhe ſhew'd her better Skill and ſingular Talent in the prudent Managery of this Nation, in a way correſponding with their *Genius*, which may be led by ſuch a gentle Method, but can't be driven by an harſher Treatment. This, I am perſwaded, made more Friends, the other might have procur'd more Enemies to the preſent Government.

For that Government which is founded in Blood and Violence, can be neither ſafe nor laſting. But Gentleneſs and Moderation are a firmer Foundation, as being moſt agreeable to the Evangelical Diſpenſation; and conſequently moſt capable of Divine Benediction, and alſo to the People, an eaſier Yoke, and a lighter Burden.

What ſtrong Cathartic do often endanger, Conſerves and Electuaries ſeldom fail to preſerve. Theſe co-operate gently with the Faculties of Nature; but thoſe by their rapid Convulſions tear the Bowels, and are apt to put the whole Frame into diſorder.

Their Majeſties therefore, being no ſuch rough and reſolute Phyſicians, had learnt the Art of Curing the Diſeaſes of the Body Politick, from a more skilful Maſter, even from him who has taught us, That as Wine is to be pour'd into the wound to ſearch, ſo Oyl is alſo neceſſary to ſupple; both

both ſometimes expedient to effect the Cure. Thus the Affections of Male-contents and Delinquents have been courted over to a better mind, by methods of Mildneſs and Pardon, rather than by the force of the Secular Arms, or rigorous Execution of Laws.

When *Antoninus Pius* was once by *Aurelius* charg'd for the like remiſneſs and lenity, he reply'd, *That he had rather ſave one Citizen of* Rome, *than kill a thouſand enemies.* We know who has done the latter, many times over, with greateſt Courage and Bravery, whilſt he made Acts of Indempnity the Vehicle of Grace and Obligation to all his Domeſtick Foes. *Opus de temporibus mundi, in vitâ Ant. Pii.*

It is a Mark of no ordinary Goodneſs, when hurt, to be able to forgive; nor any little Glory to put up Injuries, to pardon Provocations, that deſerve the ſevereſt Penalty. Such Clemency, ſuch Tenderneſs in Princes makes them look the moſt like to the Moſt High, moſt reſemble Him, whom they repreſent, and whoſe moſt glorious Attribute is, *To have Mercy and to Forgive:* and not only caſt a glorious Luſtre round about, attracting the Eyes and Hearts of other Men, but it reflects chearful and ſolacing Gleams of Glory on Majeſty it ſelf. In a word; This Grace, being the moſt excellent and perfect Act of Charity, inſpires Kings and Queens with a Greatneſs and Goodneſs of Mind, equal to their high Stations, and fit for God's Vicegerents; in whom certainly nothing is more admirable than a generous Goodneſs and Clemency, even towards great Enemies and Offenders, ſo far as is conſiſtent with the Publick Safety.

Againſt what hath been ſaid under this Head, there may perhaps be one Objection, made in favour of ſome Perſons, unhappily fallen under hard meaſures, ſince this great Revolution.

In Anſwer to that, let the Neceſſities of Government,

the indiſpenſable Obligation of executing Laws (the Diſpenſing Power being at this time of day out of doors) be duly and impartially weighed; and Reaſons enough will appear to vindicate their Majeſtie's Proceeding, and to convince any unprejudiced Mind concerning their great unwillingneſs therein. The truth is, the Queen had ſuch a quick ſenſe of Men's Sufferings of any kind, that in giving them eaſe, ſhe took a ſpecial Complacence; but to find herſelf ſometimes ſtraightned, or diſabled of that, by ſome unfortunate Impediment in the Object, ſhe accounted one of her greateſt Infelicities. The Malice and Ingratitude of Men were not able to obſtruct the flowings of her Love; ſhe overlook'd Injuries, pitied Folly, and overcame Evil with Good. Is it any wonder then, that ſuch a Perſon as this was reverenc'd and admir'd, and counted the Darling of Mankind? This inward Goodneſs, this compaſſionate Benignity of Spirit reflected a graceful Air upon all ſhe ſaid and did; and now renders her Memory precious and grateful to Poſterity, making it lovely, and continue like the Perfumes in their Aſhes, uncorrupted in the midſt of Corruption.

Having thus gone thro' my three firſt Propoſitions, ſhould I here enter upon the Conſideration of her other Vertues and Accompliſhments, Time would fail me before I could arrive to a full Period. I ſhall therefore only crave your patience would give me leave, juſt to touch her Loyalty to the King, and her admirable Reſignation at Death.

To compleat the Parallel between the vertuous Woman in the *Proverbs*, and this Royal Princeſs, (who rather excell'd the other in all the Perfections of an accompliſh'd, good Chriſtian;) 'Tis ſaid, *The heart of her husband doth*
Verſ. 11, 12. *ſafely truſt in her; ſo that he ſhall have no need of ſpoil. She will do him good, and not evil all the days of her life.*

The

The Application of all which was not impertinent to this, Royal Perſon; who, to a Punctilio, diſcharg'd the Duty of a moſt Loyal Wife. So tender was ſhe of the King's Perſon, ſo juſt to his Intereſt, ſo faithful to his Secrets committed to her Breaſt, and ſo ſenſibly concern'd for all his Affairs, that it may be truly ſaid of Her, *Many Women have done vertuouſly, but Thou excelleſt them all.*

Her Patience and Reſignation in Death, was of the ſame Stamp with her other Graces and Vertues. Crowns and Dominions are ſuch tempting things, as make Men aſpire after with greateſt vigour and intenſneſs of Mind; and which, when got, are retain'd and graſp'd with that obſtinacy and tenaciouſneſs, that Men generally expreſs as great reluctance and regret at parting with them; and will not let loſe their hold, even at the Summons of Death, without the ſharpeſt Conflict and Violence. But here was a Crown laid down with the ſame Indifference it had, at firſt, been taken up. The Commutation for an immortal One, was the chief Aim of her Care and Ambition. Her Converſation having been ſo long in Heaven, that her lively Hopes and conſtant Expectance, I had almoſt ſaid Fruition, of thoſe raviſhing Joys and Glories above, had long ſince unlac'd and wean'd her Mind from the Pleaſures and Embraces of Senſual Enjoyments. Her Thoughts were fix'd there, her Deſires always aſcending thither, where full and endleſs ſatisfaction is to be found. So that neither the Charms of this World could arreſt her Affections, nor its Frowns diſturb her Fears: She was not taken with its Applauſe, nor griev'd at the leaving of it. She was morally dead before ſhe died, and paid that Debt to Nature. To die well is the Reſult of a well-ſpent Life; but to die without being ſick is the ſpecial Favour of God, which he vouchſafed to this his peculiar Favourite, whoſe precious Soul, in a ſingle Sigh, ſtep'd over into the other World.

All

All that now remains, is to improve and apply what hath been deliver'd, to our Preſent purpoſe. The Deſign of this Diſcourſe is, *Firſt*, To poſſeſs you with due Sence of our preſent Loſs: *Secondly*, To excite you to a vigorous Imitation of this excellent Example.

1. *Firſt*, The main Deſign of this Diſcourſe is, to poſſeſs you with due Sence of our Loſs in the Perſon of this excellent Princeſs. The true Standard, whereby we are to meaſure the Loſs of any thing, muſt be taken from, either the Benefit we might have reap'd by it, or the Detriment conſequential to the Deprivation of it. By both theſe Ways, we ſhall come, to underſtand the Nature of our preſent Loſs.

As to the Benefits, we might have reap'd by this excellent Princeſs, we can eaſily conjecture at them, partly by thoſe which we have already receiv'd by her; to whoſe, and his Majeſty's wiſe Providence, under God, we owe the free Enjoyment of our Religion and Civil Properties. And partly, by thoſe incomparable Qualifications for the doing of Good, ſhe was endued with, and which I have been deſcribing to you. What glorious Advantages ſhould we have enjoy'd under her Government, if ſhe had liv'd to the utmoſt Period of Nature, and done all the Good we could have hop'd from her? How much Good might a Perſon, ſo qualified as ſhe was, ſo diſpos'd, ſo reſolv'd, ſo indefatigable in Buſineſs, we can, not uneaſily, judge, by what ſhe has done? How much more Good might, and would ſhe have done, had ſhe liv'd to the full Age of a Man? But to be taken off, at Two or Three and Thirty, in the Flower of her Age, in the beginning of her doing Good to theſe Nations, when ſhe might have liv'd at leaſt as long again, (if it had pleas'd God to have ſpar'd her to us) to go on in doing

doing as ſhe did; the Thought of this hath much pain, much uneaſineſs in it: who is able to bear the weight of it?

As for the other way of diſcovering the Nature of our Loſs, the Detriment that may follow the Death of ſo excellent a Magiſtrate, (I pray God we incur none) is yet an Embryo in the Womb of Time: we are much at a loſs in our Gueſſes of what that may be.

This I am ſure of, that tho' the good God, who never doth any thing ill, intended this immature Fall for her gain, whom he has taken to himſelf; and whom he has taken at that time, which doubtleſs ſuited beſt to her Circumſtances, tho' ſome cannot diſcern it, who conſider not, That *the righteous is taken away from the evil to come*: yet our Iſai. 57. 1. Loſs is great and irrepairable; and therefore we have juſt Cauſe to grieve for our ſelves, and for the Church; who are depriv'd of the Benefits of ſuch a Queen: how much more, ſince for ought we know, ſhe is taken away for our ſins? ſince for ought we know, it is becauſe the Age was not worthy of ſuch a Bleſſing? Since for ought we know, 'tis in order to ſome Judgment, which will come the ſooner, ſeeing ſhe, who ſtood in the Gap, is gone, when we have filled up the meaſure of our Iniquities, which God Almighty never fails to puniſh.

This Conſideration muſt needs affect us with deep ſence of our Loſs. O! how ſhall the Engliſh World, this Motherleſs Land, weep Elegies enough to condole the untimely Fall of *This Royal Cedar*, *This Light of our Eyes*, *This Breath of our Noſtrils*, *This Anointed of the Lord*; of whom, we ſaid, *under her wings we ſhall be ſafe!* *If*, as St. *Paul* ſpeaks, *for a good man, ſome would even dare* Rom. 5 7. *to die*; who would not have died for her, who was worth ten thouſands of the People? O! that our Sighs and Tears could reverſe the irreverſible Sentence, and reprieve

prieve her to Life again! but, alas! that were an impoſſible thing, and unlawful for us even to attempt. All that we can do, in this caſe, is, to pay our juſt Tribute of Sorrow to her Sacred Memory, and take up *David*'s Lamentation over *Saul*, and over *Jonathan* his Son: *The Beauty of* Iſrael *is gone; how is the mighty fallen? Tell it not in* Gath, *publiſh it not in the ſtreets of* Askelon, the Enemies Cities and Countries; *leſt the daughters of the Philiſtines rejoyce*; leſt the Daughters of uncircumcis'd Papiſts triumph. *Ye daughters of* Iſrael *weep over* your Nurſing Mother, *who clothed you in Scarlet, with other delights: who put on Ornaments of Gold upon your Apparel.*

2 Sam. 1.

Methinks I hear the valiant *Joſhua*, that Heroick Prince, who has ſo often fac'd the King of Terrour, without a frightful Thought, as if he knew no ſuch Paſſion as Fear. Methinks I hear him mourning in ſecret, ſighing out his tender Affections in ſuch ſorrowful Expreſſions, as thoſe of the Royal Prophet; *I am diſtreſſed for Thee*, my dear Conſort; *very pleaſant haſt Thou been unto me: Thy Love to me was wonderful, paſſing the Love of Women*, &c. May the God of all Conſolation buoy up his drooping Spirit, under the weight and load of ſo much grief: and continue him many and many years, to be be the Folſtern Father of this Church, the Defender of the Faith, and the Bulwark of this Nation; and together with him, thoſe Royal Branches in whom we have a farther Proſpect of a Proteſtant Succeſſion, and an Happineſs to come. Which Conſideration ſerves particularly to ſet here bounds and ſhores to our Grief and Lamentation.

Secondly, Another Deſign of this Diſcourſe is, to excite you, and my ſelf to a vigorous Imitation of this excellent Example. A good Example is of very great advantage to Religion; and no leſs uſeful and beneficial to all Men that would be Religious.

Example

Example is of ſo great Advantage to Religion, that it is the very Life of it; wherein Religion appears in its native Complexion, and real Features: whereas the moſt Learned Diſcourſes do but varniſh it over with dead Colours.

Example alſo is no leſs uſeful and beneficial to all that would be Religious: It points out the viſible way, how they may become ſo; gives us the beſt aſſurance, that either the Nature of the thing is capable of, or our ſelves can rationally deſire, of the Reality and Excellence of Religion: walks before us in all the Ways of Wiſdom, ſhewing us, that there are no Difficulties therein, but what may be conquer'd by Diligence and ſincere Endeavour: and ſo perſwades and encourages us to tread in its Steps, and follow its Tract.

From hence its evident, that a good Example is the moſt convincing, inſtructive Argument in the World; and of far more efficacy than any Precept or Counſel, as has been prov'd above. Theſe are made up only of Words and Notions, which are but aireal and intellectual; and therefore often prove flat and fruitleſs: whereas That is a ſubſtantial, demonſtrative Guide, that convinces Mankind that Vertue is both practicable and truly delightſome: Theſe are but artificial Deſcriptions of it, reſembling the dark Shade and languid Colours of the Picture: But That is the very Picture or Image of God animated, and moſt advantageouſly expos'd to Publick view, or the Original, breathing in the Life of Man, and walking upon the Stage in its lovely Charms and Attractions.

To aſſiſt us then in our Chriſtian Race, we would do well to ſet always before us the beſt and moſt excellent Examples, which are thus uſeful and advantageous. Among all the Modern Examples, what can be propos'd ſo adequate to the Chriſtian Life, ſo attractive and cogent to us, as the

Life of this moſt Chriſtian Queen? which ſeems to be entirely compos'd of thoſe Celeſtial Vertues that are the proper Graces and Ornaments of a Godlike Soul. Surely we can't reſiſt its force, and the mighty ſway of its Authority, or undervalue and forget it, without the greateſt difficulty and prodigy of Ingratitude: eſpecically if we reflect on all that Good which was in her, and all that Good which we have received by her means. Unleſs we are reſolv'd to prove forgetful and ungrateful, we can't but acknowledge it with profound Reſpect of Praiſe and Eſteem. Now the beſt Reſpect of Praiſe and Eſteem, and the higheſt Veneration we can poſſibly expreſs to her ſacred Worth, is this, to tranſcribe the fair Copy ſhe has left with us; and by That, rule our Lives: It's left with us, yea, it is recommended to us by all the Endearments imaginable. Our Imitation of it is both ſafe and warrantable from Scripture. The Author
Heb.6.12. to the *Hebrews* tells us, That we ſhould *be followers of them, who thro' faith and patience inherit the promiſe.* And again,
Ch.13.7. we muſt remember them, *which have the Rule over us*, and their Faith follow, conſidering the end of their Converſation; *i.e.* when they are dead, and gone, we are ſtill to remember them, their Works and Converſations, ſo as to endeavour the Imitation of them, to follow their Chriſtian Profeſſion, their Sanctity and Goodneſs.

If we chance to diſcern any little Blemiſhes in them, (for who is free from Faults and Imperfections in this imperfect ſtate?) them we muſt paſs by; Charity obliges us to cover and forget them. We are to be followers of all good Men, only ſo far, as they were of Chriſt, that perfect and compleat Pattern of Holineſs, Juſtice, and Temperance,
1 Pet.2.22. *who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth.*

To

To ſhut up all:

Let us, as many of us as love Religion, our Souls, and this late Patroneſs of Vertue, follow her ſingular Piety, and unaffected Goodneſs. Let's follow her conſtant and regular Devotions towards God. Let's follow her exact and uniform Self-government, according to all the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety. Let's follow her innocent and candid, her free and ingenuous Converſation amongſt Men; which was neither vain nor moroſe, neither haughty nor ſordid, but equally pois'd between all extremes. Let's imitate her impartial Diſtribution of Juſtice. Let's imitate her humble and meek Temper, which abhor'd Affectation and Vain-glory. Let's imitate her charitable and compaſſionate Diſpoſition, which was without Noiſe and Reſpect of Perſons. Laſtly, and to crown all our imitations, let us endeavour to imitate the admirable Patience of this calm and ſerene Soul, under all the Terrours and Agonies of Death, which a Conſcience void of Offence will obtain.

This will lead us thro' the Ways of Pleaſantneſs, and all the Paths of Peace; and at laſt waft us over to a more delightſome Country. Where we ſhall again ſee and enjoy the ſweet Society of all Holy Men and Women that are departed this Life in the true Faith and Fear of God's Holy Name, and gone before us into the Manſions of Eternal Bliſs: we ſhall enjoy them without the apprehenſion or danger of ever parting; and we ſhall be unſpeakably happy in each other's Embraces. Where we ſhall behold our Bleſſed Saviour, the Founder of our Faith, and the Author of our Eternal Redemption: we ſhall, not only behold him in all his Glory, but enjoy the utmoſt Effects of his infinite Love, and live with him for ever, in his heavenly Habitation: where dwells an undiſturbed Peace, and overflowing Plenty: where neither Diſeaſes approach the Body, nor Vices have acceſs to the Mind, nor Guilt does ſtain the Soul:

where

where ſhall be Life without fear of Death, and Joys without mixture of Sorrow, without Allay, and without End. To which happy Manſion God of his Infinite Mercy and Goodneſs bring us all in his good Time, thro' Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.

FINIS.